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1. U. S. Jet Reconnaissance Aircraft Intercepted at 40,000 Feet in Darkness:

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Night interceptions of an RB-45 aircraft by a total of seven enemy jets at altitudes of 35,000 to 40,000 feet have recently been reported.

Four enemy aircraft maintained formation for a period of 25-30 minutes while pursuing the RB-45 which was executing evasive maneuvers. At the same time, single interceptions were occurring including a firing pass from 1,000 feet above while the RB-45 was at 40,000 feet, and a collision course interception by an aircraft which later altered course and pulled abreast of the RB-45. While being pursued, the RB-45 employed 100 per cent power, giving a ground speed of approximately 470 knots.

COMMENT: These interceptions clearly demonstrate the Communists' ability to accomplish a very difficult mission requiring excellent equipment, highly trained personnel, and a high degree of coordination.

The operations described would require an aircraft with a minimum combat radius of approximately 350 nautical miles and a considerable speed advantage over the RB-45. These attacks could not have been accomplished with the MIG-15 or the Type-15 with the 33-gallon wing tanks currently known to be in use. However, there are recent reports of MIG-15 wing tanks having capacities up to 210 gallons each. If equipped with the larger tanks, the MIG-15 could accomplish such interceptions.

The probability that airborne intercept equipment was used suggests the employment of either Type-18 or Type-19 aircraft, both of which are known to have protuberances possibly containing radar equipment. These types are not known to be in series production, although the Type-19 is merely a modification of the MIG-15 and could be produced in one of the MIG factories.

Type 8, a twin-jet aircraft similar to the German Me-262, has been reported, but not confirmed in the Far East. This airplane is believed capable of such interception, and has a much more likely configuration for night-fighter missions.

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